

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 03721 200759Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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-----059094 200807Z /17

O R 200531Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2028  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
471.73/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 7607  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION SINAI

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E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, MOPS, IS, PE  
SUBJ: LEBANON: ISRAELI PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY COUNCIL ACTIVITY  
AND BEGIN'S TRIP TO WASHINGTON

REF: TEL AVIV 3624

1. SUMMARY: ISRAELIS ARE DISTURBED ABOUT A SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN SOUTH LEBANON. THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE RESOLUTION AND FEEL THE U.S. SHOULD NOT HAVE SUBMITTED IT WITHOUT WAITING TO HEAR PRIME MINISTER BEGIN. THIS PERCEIVED LACK OF CONSULTATION IS SEEN AS POSSIBLY LEADING TO A CONFRONTATION WITH THE U.S. IN ADDITION, EDITORIALS AND POLITICAL LEADERS ARE OPPOSED TO A UN PEACE-  
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KEEPING FORCE UNLESS IT IS PART OF A BROADER SOLUTION. LEBANON IS EXPECTED TO BE THE MAJOR ITEM IN THE DISCUSSIONS THIS WEEK BETWEEN BEGIN AND THE PRESIDENT AND BEGIN IS EXPECTED TO MAKE HIS PROPOSAL FOR THE AREA. HOWEVER, OTHER SUBJECTS WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSED. THE GENERAL EXPECTATION IS THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WILL BE DIFFICULT. END SUMMARY

2. THE TIMING OF THE U.S. MOVE TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. CONVERSATIONS WITH POLITICAL FIGURES AND OBSERVERS THIS WEEKEND HAVE REVEALED AN ALMOST UNANIMOUS DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE U.S. DECISION TO SEEK SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION ON SOUTH LEBANON IN SPITE OF ISRAELI WISHES FOR A DELAY. AFTER AN INITIAL PERIOD OF UNDERSTANDING FOR ISRAEL'S SECURITY NEEDS IN SOUTH LEBANON, THE U.S. FOR REASONS OF ITS OWN DECIDED TO GO AHEAD BUT IT IS ARGUED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO HEAR BEGIN FIRST. THIS UNILATERAL U.S. ACTION ABOLISHES THE MYTH OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, ACCORDING TO MANY. THIS HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE AND PARTICULARLY FOR OUR EFFORTS TO DISCUSS OUR DIFFERENCES ON 242. SOME OBSERVERS SEE THE U.S. UNILATERAL DECISION AS A FORM OF PRESSURE ON BEGIN AND BELIEVE THAT THE MOVE HAS SOMEWHAT STRENGTHENED HIM AS HE DEPARTS FOR WASHINGTON.

3. NO FAITH IN THE UN. HOWEVER, IN ADDITION TO DISCONTENT WITH THE TIMING OF THE U.S. RESOLUTION, THERE IS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE RESOLUTION MAKES NO REFERENCE TO TERRORISM AND THERE IS WIDESPREAD SCORN FOR THE UN, COUPLED WITH DISBELIEF THAT ANY UN FORCE WOULD BE EFFECTIVE. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH MOSHE ARENS, CHAIRMAN OF THE KNESSET FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY COMMITTEE, HE RECALLED THAT ISRAEL'S PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THE UN HAD NOT BEEN GOOD AND SAID THAT SUCH A FORCE COULD NOT BE EFFECTIVE. HE SAID SCATHINGLY THAT ANYTIME IT DETECTED A POSSIBLE VIOLATION "IT WOULD HAVE TO CALL NEW YORK." HE SAID THE ONLY SOLUTION WAS FOR LEBANESE FORCES (WITH ISRAELI HELP) TO FILL THE VACUUM.

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WEIZMAN AND GUR HAVE MADE SIMILAR POINTS IN INTERVIEWS. OPPOSITION LEADERS PERES SUPPORTS THE GOVERNMENT ON THIS AND DESCRIBED THE UN AS A LEGALISTIC RATHER THAN AN OPERATIVE ORGANIZATION. HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE UN AS A HOSTILE ORGANIZATION AND SAID IT WOULD NOT BE EFFECTIVE AGAINST TERRORISTS OR GUERRILLAS WHEN THE IDENTIFY OF TRANSGRESSORS WAS NOT CLEARLY EVIDENT. A POST EDITORIAL SUMS IT UP: "A UN FORCE, RATHER THAN BECOMING A FORCE TO CURB TERRORISM, WOULD SIMPLY BECOME AN INSTRUMENT TO PREVENT ISRAEL FROM PROTECTING ITSELF AGAINST RENEWED INCURSIONS FROM THE NORTH."

4. DISORDERS AND DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUED YESTERDAY AND TODAY THROUGH OUT THE WEST BANK AND IN GAZA. SEVERAL PROMINENT GAZANS TOLD US THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD OVERREACTED TO WHAT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN TRUANT SCHOOL CHILDREN USING LEBANON AS AN EXCUSE FOR ANTI-ISRAEL DEMONSTRATIONS AND HAD MADE A NUMBER OF ARRESTS AND LEVIED HEAVY FINES ON PARENTS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD REPORTS OF UNEASE AND DESPAIR AMONG ISRAELI ARABS AND DISORDERS MAY OCCUR IN ISRAEL, PERHAPS FOCUSING ON THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF LAND DAY (MARCH 30).

5. THE OUTLOOK. WHILE ISRAELIS EXPECT THAT BEGIN'S TALKS WITH

THE PRESIDENT WILL FOCUS ON SOUTH LEBANON, THEY EXPECT THE DISCUSSIONS WILL ALSO COVER OTHER SUBJECTS, PRIMARILY THE PEACE PROCESS. HOWEVER, LEBANON TAKES PRIORITY, AT LEAST FOR NOW, OVER PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS LEADS US TO CONCLUDE THAT IN SOME ISRAELIS' MINDS, THERE IS ALMOST A DESPAIR THAT REAL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS ARE NO LONGER POSSIBLE AND THAT IF PEACE IS NOT ATTAINABLE, AT LEAST SECURITY FROM TERRORIST ATTACKS FROM LEBANON OUGHT TO BE ASSURED. THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT ARE EXPECTED TO BE TOUGH, BUT ISRAELIS EXPECT SOME PROGRESS; BEGIN WOULD NOT GO IF HE EXPECTED A DISASTER. NEVERTHELESS, HE FACES A DIFFICULT TASK.

VIETS

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